

Spring Gardening How-Tos

Mulch the surface of your garden beds, after your spring weeding. A blanket of compost or wood chip mulch—2–3 inches thick—will conserve soil moisture when spring warms up, delay the need to begin watering, and feed the soil—all helping to keep plants healthy. It will also help keep weeds out, and make it easier to hand pull weeds that do take hold.

Plant perennials, shrubs and trees now to help roots grow before the dry season begins. Otherwise, wait until fall. Selecting the right plants for your site will lead to a healthy and beautiful garden, and easier maintenance with fewer resources needed.

Learn! Our free Savvy Gardener classes are just around the corner. Go to www.savingwater.org/savvygardenerclasses.htm for the list of classes and locations. You can also contact the Garden Hotline at **(206) 633-0224** and help@gardenhotline.org for expert, environmentally–sound answers to your gardening questions, and it’s free! Don’t forget to “like” us on Facebook—www.facebook.com/savvygardenernews.



I’m cleaning out my garage. Where can I take my hazardous products for safe disposal?

You can dispose of hazardous household materials and products – such as fluorescent light bulbs and tubes, oil-based paint, antifreeze and cleaning products – at no charge at several convenient locations. For more information, go to www.seattle.gov/util and search “Hazardous Waste” or call **(206) 296-4692**, 9 a.m. to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday, except holidays.

How can I store food scraps in my kitchen and keep my kitchen clean?

Seattle residents have sent us several great suggestions!

- Use a durable container with a snug lid. Some folks put a paper towel in the bottom. After you dump the scraps in the cart, wash the container to keep it fresh.
- Use an approved compostable bag to store your scraps or line your kitchen container. Find a list at www.seattle.gov/util/foodwaste or call **(206) 684-8717**, press #2 to request a list.
- Wrap scraps in newspaper or put them in a plain paper bag. Drop the whole thing in the cart.
- Keep your food scraps in the refrigerator/freezer.
- Take your food scraps out to the curb every few days, especially during the summer.

For more information on what can be recycled, visit www.seattle.gov/util/lookup or contact Ask Evelyn at www.facebook.com/EvelyntheEnvelope or PO BOX 34018 Seattle, WA 98124-4018.

This information can be made available on request to accommodate people with disabilities and those who need language translation assistance. Call Seattle Public Utilities at **(206) 684-3000**. TDD telephone number is **(206) 233-7241**. Please recycle this newsletter or pass it on to a friend. Printed on recycled paper made out of 100% post-consumer waste.



Don’t Miss Compost Days

Last year, Seattle diverted 125,000 tons of food and yard waste from the landfill through curbside collection and backyard composting.

Way to go! Compost Days is celebrating Seattle’s composting success by offering the biggest discounts of the year on compost and kitchen scrap composting products.

Now through April 30, Seattle Public Utilities and Cedar Grove Composting are offering coupons worth:

- 35% off kitchen food scrap containers
- Buy 2 bags of compost, get a 3rd bag free
- 15% off bulk compost
- And much, much more!

Look inside for Compost Days coupons and find out locations of participating retailers!



Find Corey and win fabulous prizes! Details inside.

PRESORTED STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SEATTLE, WA
PERMIT NO. 6000

Compost Days Coupons Inside!

For interpretation services please call 206-684-3000.
如需要口譯服務，請撥電話號碼206-684-3000。
통역 서비스를 원하시면 206-684-3000으로 전화하세요.
Wixii! turjubaan afka ah ku saabsan, Fadlan la soo xariir taleefoonka: 206-684-3000.
Para servicios de interpretación por favor llame al 206-684-3000.
Para sa serbisyo ng tagapagpaliwanag, tumawag sa 206-684-3000.
Vê dịch vụ phiên dịch xin gọi 206-684-3000.

Seattle Public Utilities
700 5th Avenue, Suite 4900
PO Box 34018
Seattle, WA 98124-4018

Tips and Programs for Seattle Residents

Spring 2012

Seattle Public Utilities

CurbWaste & Conserve



Spring Clean starts April 1

It’s time for Spring Clean — Seattle’s premier community cleanup event. Seattle Public Utilities invites you and your neighbors to participate April 1—May 31.

Help pick up litter, stencil storm drains, paint out graffiti, remove invasive plants, or join an event in your community. All Spring Clean projects are on public property. Volunteers receive free litter cleanup bags, gloves, safety vests, and waste disposal permits.

Get started today:

- ✓ Call **(206) 233-7187 -OR-**
- ✓ Visit www.seattle.gov/util/SpringClean

Free Auto Leaks Class

Oil and water don’t mix. Keep oil and other car fluid leaks from harming our local waterways and wildlife by fixing car leaks. Join the experts at South Seattle Community College’s Automotive Technology Program for a FREE auto leaks class—a \$45 value! Watch our video and hear what past participants have to say: www.bit.ly/FixThatLeak.

Classes are offered on April 14 and May 12 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. **Hurry!** Space is limited.

To register:

- ✓ Call **(206) 684-3056 -OR-**
- ✓ Email idris.beauregard@seattle.gov

Stop Unwanted Phone Books

Hurry! There are just a few weeks left to stop delivery of unwanted phone books before they’re dropped on your doorstep again.

Last year, nearly 75,000 Seattle residents and businesses told publishers they no longer want the yellow pages. They stopped the printing and delivery of almost 400,000 phone books, saving more than 400 tons of paper every year.

Phone book companies may be fined \$125 per violation if they deliver phone books after a Seattle resident or business has opted out.

Opting out is FREE! Sign up for this service today at www.seattle.gov/stopphonebooks or call **(206) 504-3066**. Stop summer deliveries of Dex and other phone books, as well as white pages and junk mail: **opt-out before May 22!**

the Big Dig *Can you dig it?*

Play the Big Dig
— a fun and
family-friendly
scavenger
hunt at dozens
of locations
throughout Seattle.

Find Corey the Compostable
Apple Core and win
fabulous prizes!

Hosted by Ciscoe Morris, the
Big Dig will give 20 finalists
an opportunity to win even
bigger prizes — including a
garden makeover!

To learn more, visit

www.cgcompost.com.



For a complete list of store locations, hours and directions,
visit www.cgcompost.com or call (877) 764-5748

Compost Days

Free Bag of Compost

**Buy 2 bags of Cedar Grove Compost
Get a 3rd Bag Free!**

Find a list of participating Compost Days retailers at
www.cgcompost.com or by calling 1-877-764-5748



Coupon valid now through April 30, 2012 at participating retailers. Not all Cedar Grove retailers are participating, so please check on-line for a the list of participating retailers.



35% off Kitchen Scrap Kits

**Back by popular demand, these
attractive and convenient
containers make collecting food
scraps clean and easy!**



For a limited time, get a kitchen food scrap collector with 20 compostable bags and a pack of seeds for just \$13.99 plus tax.

Limit: 4 kits per coupon, per purchase. Seattle residents only. Offer valid through April 30, 2012.

For participating retailers visit: www.cgcompost.com or call 1-877-764-5748.

15% Off Bulk Compost

Pick it up at participating retailers or have it delivered to your home.*

Visit www.cgcompost.com or call 1-877-764-5748 for details to order or find participating retail locations near you.

Valid now through April 30, 2012.

*Delivery charges will not be discounted. See web site for minimum order requirements.

Healthy Lawn Tips

Save time and money this spring by “grasscycling” - leaving grass clippings on the lawn to break down and feed the soil. Studies show that grasscycling improves lawn rooting depth, disease and drought resistance, provides free fertilizer, and doesn’t cause thatch. You save money on water, fertilizer and yard waste disposal, and save the time and energy it takes to bag and drag clippings to the curb.

Mowing Tips:

- ✓ Mow when the grass is dry, and keep mower blades sharp.
- ✓ Raise mowing heights or mow more frequently during fast spring growth.
- ✓ Water and fertilize less – save when you grasscycle!

Shopping Tips:

You can grasscycle with your conventional mower. Just leave the bag off and let the clippings drop – earthworms will compost them. When it’s time to buy a new mower, look for a “mulching” mower. Check the most recent June issue of *Consumer Reports* for mulching mower ratings, or call the Garden Hotline to find out where to buy a mulching mower.

Push mowers are quiet and inexpensive. They do a great job of grasscycling because they scatter clippings to break down quickly into the soil.

Electric mulching mowers come either with a cord or with a rechargeable battery—no cord. They’re quiet, non-polluting, and low maintenance. They chop clippings finely into mulch and blow it down into the lawn, where it breaks down quickly and feeds the soil, so clippings won’t be tracked in by pets and kids. The lawn looks as clean as if it were bagged, but you get free fertilizer and less work!

Gas mulching mowers are more powerful and may be a good choice if you have a very large lawn. Some convert easily from mulching to bagging. Look for 4-cycle mowers—you don’t have to mix gas and oil, and they run much cleaner.



To learn more,
contact the Garden Hotline:
(206) 633-0224
help@gardenhotline.org
www.gardenhotline.org

Little Leaks =Big Bills

Leaky toilets, faucets, and outdoor watering systems around your home could cost a typical household hundreds of dollars a year on their utility bill, and waste thousands of gallons of water. If you have an unusually high utility bill, there’s a good chance you have a leaky toilet.

If your toilet is leaking it is most likely due to a worn-out flapper. Purchasing the wrong flapper could compromise your toilet’s flushing performance—remember to bring your old flapper with you to the retailer so you purchase the correct flapper for your toilet.

If your existing toilet was installed before 1994, you should consider replacing it with a high-efficiency 1.28 gallons per flush WaterSense-labeled toilet, since parts for older toilets can be hard to find. For a limited time, Seattle Public Utilities customers who replace their old water-guzzling toilets with WaterSense-labeled models are eligible for a \$30 rebate.



Learn more:
www.savingwater.org
(206) 684-SAVE (7283)

*How to check for
and fix a leaky toilet:*

- ✓ Remove the toilet tank lid.
- ✓ Put several drops of food coloring in the tank.
- ✓ Put lid back on but don’t flush toilet yet.
- ✓ After about 10 minutes, look in the bowl.
- ✓ If you see color in the bowl, you have a leak.
- ✓ To remove your flapper, disconnect the chain from the flush arm, unclip the flapper from the over fill valve, and remove.
- ✓ Take your old flapper to the store to ensure you purchase the correct flapper for your toilet.